

Old Testament Bible Heroes

Ruth - Loyalty

Ready (*Plant the seed*)

Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. –John 15:13

Set (*Get the conversation started*)

Naomi's family moved to Moab to escape the famine in Bethlehem. With her were her husband and two sons. They lived in Moab for about ten years where her sons married and her husband dies. Soon after, her sons die as well and leave the three women alone. One of Naomi's daughters in law goes back to her family, but Ruth chooses to stay with Naomi and accompany her back to Bethlehem. She says, "Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay." How devoted she was to Ruth to leave her homeland of Moab for a new life in Judah! Being a Moabite among the Israelites would be difficult. With no one to provide for them, Ruth gleaned the wheat fields behind the farmers for scraps to make bread for her and Naomi. God was with Ruth, though, and she caught the eye of Boaz who asked to marry her. From the marriage of Ruth and Boaz came their great grandson, King David who was the ancestor of Jesus!

Loyalty means standing firm in your friendship and being supportive even when it's hard. When your team wins, you celebrate together, but when you lose you must also support each other, not place blame. Being a loyal teammate means that you always work together and encourage one another. What if you are new to a team? Just like Ruth entering into Bethlehem, as an outsider, you will find yourself in new places with new people; maybe a new sports team or a new school. Ruth's loyalty to Naomi opened the opportunity for her to marry Boaz. God will also put you in new places to do amazing things! God rewarded Ruth's loyalty and righteousness with the line of the Savior Jesus Christ! So, always be brave and trust in God's plan.

Grow (*Talk it over*)

- What are the characteristics of a loyal teammate?
- Why is it important to be a loyal teammate?
- How can you encourage others through the story of Ruth and Naomi?

Pray

Father God, thank you for the story of Ruth and Naomi. It encourages us to be loyal friends. Please help us to be brave when we enter into new situations and places knowing that you have it all worked out for our benefit. We trust in you, Lord. In Jesus's name, Amen.

Overtime (*Optional object lesson as time permits*)

Game: The Human Knot

Materials: None

Say: Part of being a loyal friend means never letting go or giving up when things get tough.

Have players stand shoulder-shoulder in a circle and reach across with their right hand and grab the right hand of the player across from them. Do the same with the left.

(This game only works with an even number so, coaches, join in if needed!)

Once they are all connected, they must work together to untangle, but cannot let go of any hands.

Note: This game gets harder the more players involved. If you have a large team, split into 2 groups.

When finished, say: That was fun! You did a great job holding onto each other and working as a team. We are going to have a great season together!